

## Message Text

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46

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 L-02 H-01 NIC-01 /032 W

----- 122157

R 120919Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0568

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 1914

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RP, ORIT, SOCI

SUBJECT: COMELEC MEETS WITH RELIGIOUS GROUPS TO  
DISCUSS REFERENDUM

REF: MANILA 1788

1. COMELEC MEETING FEBRUARY 12 WITH VARIOUS RELIGIOUS GROUPS HAD BEEN ADVERTISED BY GOP AS "CONSULTATION" TO HELP IN EFFORTS TO HOLD "FREE AND ORDERLY" REFERENDUM FEBRUARY 27. IT TURNED OUT INSTEAD TO BE ONE-SIDED AFFAIR WITH MOST TIME DEVOTED TO EXPLANATION BY COMMISSIONER PEREZ OF VARIOUS REFERENDUM INSTRUCTIONS AND PROCEDURES.

2. ACCORDING MSGR. CORNELIO PARADO, CBCP ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL, WHO ATTENDED SESSION, COMELEC IN EFFECT REJECTED POINTS 3 (NON-PARTISAN WATCHDOG ELECTION COMMITTEE) AND 4 (SUSPENSION OF PENALTIES FOR NON-VOTERS) PROPOSED BY CBCP TO MAKE REFERENDUM "MEANINGFUL" (SEE MANILA 1499). WITH RESPECT POINT 3, PEREZ POINTED OUT  
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THAT CHAIRMAN OF EACH 3-MAN BARANGAY REFERENDUM COMMITTEE

HAD AUTHORITY APPOINT UP TO 5 OBSERVERS, AND THAT SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO MEET CHURCH'S REQUIREMENTS.

3. PARADO COMMENTED TO EMBASSY THAT OBSERVERS WOULD BE NOTHING MORE THAN JUST THAT: THEY WOULD HAVE NO POWER TO SUPERVISE EITHER VOTING OR COUNTING OF BALLOTS. AS FAR AS POINT 4 WAS CONCERNED, PEREZ STATED THAT PENALTIES FOR NON-VOTERS STILL HELD. HOWEVER, HE TOLD CHURCHMEN, THERE WOULD BE NO PENALTIES FOR "ABUSES OR BAD CONDUCT" DURING THE VOTING PERIOD.

4. COMMENT: CBCP IS OBVIOUSLY DISAPPOINTED WITH OUT-COME MEETING WHICH WAS MORE LECTURE THAN CONSULTATION. PEREZ APPARENTLY TOLD GROUP IN EFFECT THAT REFERENDUM GUIDELINES ALREADY LAID DOWN AND COULD NOT BE UNDONE AT THIS LATE DATE. IN ATTEMPT TO ALLAY CBCP UNHAPPINESS WITH RESULTS MEETING, PEREZ HAS REPORTEDLY EXTENDED INVITATION TO CARDINAL ROSALES AND 4 CATHOLIC BISHOPS (INCLUDING ALBERTO, CLAVER, AND VARELA) TO MEET WITH HIM AGAIN FEBRUARY 15. CBCP HAS NOT DECIDED YET WHETHER TO ACCEPT OFFER.

SULLIVAN

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFERENDUMS, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, RELIGIOUS GROUPS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 12 FEB 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Reference:** 75 MANILA 1788  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 14 JUL 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <14 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <15 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** COMELEC MEETS WITH RELIGIOUS GROUPS TO DISCUSS REFERENDUM  
**TAGS:** PINT, SOCI, RP  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006